

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-6 and 8-20 are all the claims pending in the application. Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claim 19 has been amended to make it consistent with the specification at page 21.

Applicants thank the Examiner for withdrawing previous rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103. However, the Examiner has issued a new rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 1, 2, 4-6 and 8-20 stand rejected as being obvious over Smith et al. (US 4,296,069) (hereinafter "Smith") in view of Richards et al. (US 6,296,809) (hereinafter "Richards"). Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw this rejection.

As alleged by the Examiner, Smith fails to teach or suggest a temperature control means which holds the first and second chemical analysis elements at predetermined temperatures and a detector comprising a bar code reader for detecting the position of the chemical analysis element in which the chemical analysis element is conveyed by reading a bar code provided on each chemical analysis element (see page 3 of the office action).

Furthermore, Richards is not prior art with respect to Applicants' claims. The U.S. filing date of Richards (i.e. provisional application February 27, 1998) is later than the filing date (i.e. January 27, 1998) of the priority documents (i.e. Japanese Appln. No. 14467/1998) of the present application. The priority date of the present application antedates the U.S. provisional filing date of Richards.

Applicants have filed herewith a verified English-language translation of the Japanese priority document. Each of the claims is respectfully submitted to be fully supported by the Japanese priority document. The filing of the English-language translation perfects Applicants' claim to benefit from the foreign priority date of January 27, 1998 with respect to Applicants' claims. In view of the above, Richards is not prior art within the meaning of § 102.

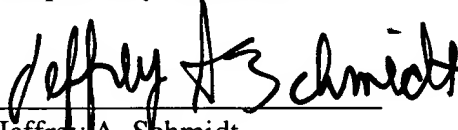
As a result, since Smith does not teach all recitations of the Applicants' claims and Richards is not a prior art reference, the rejection is thus moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw this rejection.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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WASHINGTON OFFICE



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

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【Name of the Document】 ABSTRACT

【Summary】

【Object】 To provide a chemical analysis system for analyzing the components of a sample liquid, such as blood and the like, which can carry out efficient measurement of the optical density and the ionic activity of a chemical component.

【Means for Achieving the Object】

Provided in an incubator 14 which holds a chemical analysis element 11 at a constant temperature are a light measuring head 27 for measuring the optical density of a chemical component contained in a sample liquid and an analyzer 21 which measures the ionic activity in the sample liquid. The chemical analysis element 11 for the measurement of the optical density is held in the incubator 14 at a temperature suitable for the measurement of the optical density, and a chemical analysis element 11' for the measurement of the ionic activity is held in the incubator 14 at a temperature suitable for the measurement of the ionic activity.

【Selected Figure】 Figure 1